

## Roles & Responsibilities of the Paramedic

2006 Edition

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### Objectives

- List the duties of the EMT-Paramedic in preparation for handling emergency medical responses.
- List the duties of the EMT-Paramedic during an emergency response.

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### Objectives

- List the duties of the EMT-Paramedic after an emergency response.
- List the post-graduation responsibilities of the EMT-Paramedic.

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## Objectives

- Recognize differences among certification, licensure, and reciprocity.
- State the benefits and responsibilities of continuing education for the EMT-Paramedic.
- Describe the major benefits of subscribing to professional journals.

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## What Is a Paramedic?

- By the side of the Doctor
- Highest Trained Pre Hospital Provider
- Primary Responsibility is Patient Care
- Provide support to family members or bystanders

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## Early History

- Paintings of roman battlegrounds lend evidence to early organized pre hospital care.
- Napoleonic era showed evidence of first ambulance, a horse drawn carriage.
- Clara Barton coordinated care for the wounded during the civil war and brought the red cross to the U.S.
- 1860's brought first civilian ambulances to Cincinnati and N.Y.C.

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## Early History

- World War I – battle field ambulance corps developed
- World War II – air medical transport developed.
- Korean war – used helicopters to evacuate the wounded

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## Ambulance Crew of 1958.



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## Disadvantages of the 1958 System

- No trained personnel
- No standards
- No emergency access numbers
- **“Scoop & Shoot” with no stabilization**
- **Funeral Home Sponsored!**

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## Scenario

- You arrive at a scene of a multiple motor vehicle accident. You proceed to your triage and find you have ten injured patients of which two are seriously injured.

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## Comparison of the Patient Care in the Scenario

- Ability to Provide Professional Level of Patient Care
- Ability to begin treatments immediately
- Multiple Casualty Incident and Procedures
- Incident Command Procedures
- Transportation to appropriate facility

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## Emergency Medical Services

- Complex health care system that provides immediate, on scene patient care to those suffering from illness or injury.

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## Introduction to Emergency Medical Services

- Need for realistic expectations of paramedic practice
- Paramedic job description and responsibilities
- The challenges of becoming a paramedic

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## Changes in the Field

- Pre-1966 environment
- White Paper
- US Dept. of Transportation

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## Pre-1966 EMS

- Poorly trained technicians
- Minimal Equipment
- No MD involvement
- No Radio Communications
- No Systematic Approach

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## Landmark in EMS Development

- Accidental Death and Disability: The Neglected Disease of Modern Society
- Highway safety Act of 1966

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## Impact of the “White Paper”

- National Report Published in 1966 by the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council’s Committee on Trauma and Shock
- Exposed deficiencies in emergency medical care
- Outlined suggestions for improvements in the care of patients

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## Highway Safety Act

- Created the USDOT and the NHTSA
- Provided legislative authority and financial assistance to improve EMS
- Directed states to develop effective EMS programs or risk losing 10% of their federal highway construction funds.

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## US Dept of Transportation

- Responsible for Implementing EMT Standards
- Developed Course Curriculums
- Standardized Equipment Requirements

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## The 1970's

- EMS Systems Act of 1973
  1. Paved the way for states to benefit from federal funding by developing regional EMS organizations
  2. Identified 15 required components of an EMS system
  3. Mandated that programs funded by the DHHS plan and implement a regional approach for emergency response and immediate care for trauma patients

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## The 1970's

- Played a major role in development of regional EMS systems between 1974 & 1981
- National education standards for paramedics developed in 1977

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## 1980's

- Health care reform
  - Impact on paramedics and way health care provided
  - Managed care and extended scope of practice
- How might managed care affect a paramedic?

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## Scope of Practice

- Developed from the cost containment environment of managed care
- Expanding preventative health care services by EMT's and EMT-P's
- Driven not by what EMT-P's can do but by what they should do

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## EMS Today

- Network of coordinated services that provide medical care to the community
- Services are defined by the ten components of NHTSA technical assistance program

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## Ten Components

1. Comprehensive EMS and trauma system legislation
2. Resource management and administration
3. Professional training
4. Communications systems
5. Transportation systems
6. Facilities

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7. A trauma system integrated within EMS
8. EMS physician involvement
9. Public information, education, and prevention
10. Data collection, QI, and research

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## EMS System Operation

- Citizen involvement
  1. Funding → especially for volunteer EMS
  2. Recognizing need for emergency service
  3. Citizen first aid, CPR, **AED**
  4. Citizen assistance at the scene
- Citizen education
  1. Paramedic involvement in community education
  2. Helps build support and awareness of EMS and health in general

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- Dispatch
  1. Coordinates response
  2. Notification to appropriate agencies
  3. Acts as a conduit between various responding agencies
  4. Provide pre arrival instructions as needed
- Pre Hospital care
  1. **Stabilization** through BLS or ALS care

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- Activating the EMS system
  1. 911/"E-911"
  2. Cell phones
  3. Pull boxes (becoming rare)
  4. CB radios (rare today)

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- Hospital care
  1. Physicians and PA's
  2. Nurses and NP's
  3. Technicians
  4. Ancillary support staff
  5. Diagnostic services
  6. Rehabilitation

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## EMS Providers

- Telecommunications
- First responder (CFR)
- EMT-B
- EMT-I
- EMT-CC (“Level 3”) – not uniform
- EMT-P

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## Professional Ethics

- Standards of conduct designed for the patient's benefit
- Oath of Geneva, EMT Oath, EMT Code of Ethics
- Legal obligations vs. ethical responsibilities
- More details in the Medical/Legal Lecture

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## Professional Ethics Cont.

- The art and science of pre-hospital EMS
  - Delivering an increasingly technical level of patient care
    - For example?
  - Having compassion and respect for human dignity
    - Nothing new here!

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## Professionalism

- The way in which a person follows the standards of conduct and performance established by the profession.
- Also includes adherence to a code of ethics of that profession

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## Health Care Professional

- Provide quality patient care
- Instill pride in the profession
- Strive for high standards
- **Earn** respect from others

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## The Role of the Paramedic



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## Basic Duties of the Paramedic

- Preparation
  1. Physical, mental, emotional
  2. Equipment and supplies
  3. Knowledge and skill maintenance
- Response to the scene
- Scene safety
- Patient assessment

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## Basic Duties of the Paramedic

- Recognition of injuries or illness
- Management
- Appropriate dispositions
- Patient transfer
- Documentation
- Returning to service

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- So now based on the last 2 slides it looks like a Paramedic is doing what an EMT does
- **So, why am I wasting 18 months of my life here? What's the difference between an EMT and Paramedic?**

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## Medical Direction

- Paramedics act as physician extenders, using diagnostic tools and skills derived from medical practice.
- Made possible through medical direction that are either standing orders or medical control options.
- **→Bring the ER to the street and homes**

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## Types of Medical Direction

- On-line direct
  1. Communication with a physician
  2. Benefits
    1. Immediate and patient specific care
    2. Telemetry
    3. Continuous QI

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- Off-line/indirect
  1. Prospective
    1. Uses treatment protocols/standing orders developed by a physician group
    2. May involve selection of equipment, supplies and personnel
  2. Retrospective
    1. Refers to activities performed after the call has been completed. (PCR review and QI)

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## Leadership Characteristics

- Self-confidence
- Established credibility through field work
- Inner strength, always in control
- Ability to communicate
- Decisive, accepts responsibility

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## Post-Graduate Responsibilities

- Types of professional recognition
- Maintenance of knowledge and skills

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## Professional Recognition

- Certification
- Licensure
- Reciprocity

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## Maintain Knowledge & Skills

- Refresher classes
- Practicing skills
- Attending seminars
- Reading journals

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## Teaching Public Education Classes

- CPR
- EMS system education

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## Continuing Education

- Combating erosion of knowledge and skills
- Obtaining new information and skills
- Types of educational formats available
- Importance of keeping current
  - Especially for rarely used skills

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## Professional Organizations

- Forums for sharing ideas and information
- Provide paramedic with a voice in EMS-related issues
- Serve as clearinghouses for continuing education

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## National EMS Organizations

- National Association of EMT's
- National Flight Paramedics Association
- National Association for Search and Rescue
- National Council of State EMS Training Coordinators
- National Association of State EMS Directors
- National Association of EMS Physicians

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## National Registry

- Assists in developing/evaluating EMT training programs
- Establishes qualifications for registration and re-registration
- Establishes national minimum level of competency
- Serves as a tool for interstate reciprocity

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## Professional Journals

- The importance of subscribing to an EMS journal
  - EMS Journal, JEMS...
- Keeping current through reading
- Opportunities to publish articles
- Continuing education credits

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